

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 08489 300143Z

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ACTION DLOS-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 NEA-14 ISO-00 AF-10 EA-11 EUR-25 RSC-01

IO-14 CG-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15

AID-20 CEQ-02 COA-02 COME-00 EB-11 EPA-04 NSF-04

SCI-06 FEA-02 ACDA-19 AEC-11 AGR-20 DOTE-00 FMC-04

INT-08 JUSE-00 OMB-01 CIEP-03 CEA-02 TRSE-00 OIC-04

DRC-01 /297 W

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R 300108Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5642

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 8489

FROM USDEL LOS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAAGS: PLOS

SUBJECT: LOS: STRAITS DISCUSSIONS WITH MOROCCO

1. DELREPS ADMIRAL MORRIS AND DUGGER MET WITH EL GHARBI, LEADER MOROCCAN DELEGATION, TO DISCUSS STRAITS. EL GHARBI WAS FRIENDLY AND APPEARED TO WELCOME OPPORTUNITY PRIVATELY TO ELABORATE REASONS FOR MOROCCAN POSITION.

2. AFTER BRIEF DISCUSSION OF FISHING PROBLEMS, EL GHARBI FOCUSED ON ENCLAVES OF CEUTA AND MELILLA, DESCRIBING THEM AS "RUNNING SORES" AND "HUMILIATION". MOROCCO RECOGNIZES THEM AS SPANISH-OCCUPIED MOROCCAN TERRITORY, AND BY A DECREE OF 20 JULY 1974 SUPPLEMENTING A LAW OF MARCH 1973 HAD DRAWN BASELINES WHICH RESULT IN THEIR BEING SURROUNDED ENTIRELY BY INTERNAL
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PAGE 02 CARACA 08489 300143Z

WATERS. SPAIN HAS NOT PROTESTED BECAUSE OF ANALOGY TO COLONY

OF GIBRALTAR ON OPPOSITE SHORE. IN MOROCCO'S VIEW, THERE ARE NO SPANISH WATERS ON SOUTH SIDE OF STRAIT. CEUTA AND MELILLA ARE UNDER MILITARY RULE FOR PRACTICAL PURPOSES, EL GHARBI SAID, THOUGH THEY ARE FREE PORTS WITH CIVIL GOVERNORS. HE DECLARED THAT MILITARY BASES SUCH AS THESE HAD NO JUSTIFICATION IN VIEW OF THE NATURE OF MODERN WEAPONS, AND IN AN OBSCURE ASIDE COMMENTED THAT MOROCCO HAD CO-SPONSORED MEXICAN LANGUAGE DEALING WITH MILITARY DEVICES ON CONTINENTAL SHELF WITH CEUTA IN MIND.

3. CITING LONG-STANDING FRIENDSHIP WITH US, EL GHARBI SAID IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE RECOGNIZE THAT MOROCCO'S POSITION IS A RESULT OF THE POLITICAL REALITIES OF THEIR RELATIONS WITH THEIR FRIENDS, PARTICULARLY THE ARAB WORLD. HE STEADFASTLY AVOIDED BEING DRAWN INTO DISCUSSION OF MERITS OR DETAILS OF STRAITS TRANSIT POSITIONS, COMMENTING ONLY THAT STRAITS SHOULD BE ZONES OF PEACE AND SECURITY IN MOROCCO'S VIEW, POSSIBLY ANOTHER REFERENCE TO CEUTA.

4. COMMENT: EL GHARBI APPEARED TO GIVE CLEAR SIGNAL THAT MOROCCO'S STRAITS POSITION AND POSITION ON MEXICAN PROPOSAL WAS DICTATED PARTLY BY NEED FOR LEVERAGE ON CEUTA AND MELILLA, PARTLY BY NEED TO SUPPORT THEIR ARAB BRETHREN AND TO A LESSER EXTENT THE GROUP OF 77. IN EARLIER DISCUSSION DURING SAME DAY OF AMB STEVENSON AND JOHN MOORE WITH HAMID OF EGYPTIAN DELEGATION, HAMID INDICATED THAT KEY TO GETTING OAU TO SUPPORT UNIMPEDED TRANSIT, ASSUMING ACCEPTABLE TIRAN SOLUTION, WAS TO GET MOROCCO TO BACK DOWN ON STRAITS, AND RECOMMENDED HIGH-LEVEL DEMARCHE TO RABAT. DELEGATION RECOMMENDS APPROPRIATE FOLLOW THROUGH IN RABAT ON STRAITS ISSUE.
STEVENSON

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